

From: Kevin Ledgister
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/25/01 9:53pm
Subject: Public Comment

> From:

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> To the US Dept. of Justice
> Public Comments on Microsoft Anti-Trust Settlement
>
> As a consumer I wish to express my view that the proposed settlement
> does not appear to go far enough to protect consumers from Microsoft's
> illegal monopoly practices.
>
> First, since the Appeals Court unanimously declared that Microsoft had
> acted illegally, there does not seem to be any punitive remedy that
> addresses the gains that Microsoft made by acting illegally.
>
> One of those gains has been Microsoft's ability to dictate proprietary
> web browser standards and technologies because of its illegally gained
> monopoly. As a consumer, I am harmed because I choose a competing
> product that adheres to the standards established by recognized bodies
> that govern the Internet, but I still cannot appropriately view many
> websites or use their services because many websites are programmed to be
> accessed with Microsoft's Internet Explorer instead of Netscape, which
> used to be the case. Microsoft should be forced to adhere to standards
> established by a recognized Internet body so that competing browsers are
> able to freely view websites and obtain services without having to switch
> browsers because of the proprietary hooks that Microsoft was able to
> establish based on it's illegally gained monopoly.
>
> Microsoft should not be allowed to continue to control the browser market
> because it was derived from illegal gains. Microsoft should be allowed
> to continue to "innovate" but not without incorporating established
> standards so that consumers have equal access to Internet content.
>
> As a consumer, I have also been harmed by having to purchase Microsoft
> Windows and having to pay that price, which includes paying for
> additional software that is not necessary for the operating system to run
> and allow for the installation of other applications.
>
> Because Microsoft is such a monopoly, any additional software that ships
> along with Windows, without additional charge, has the potential to

> create an additional monopoly. Unfortunately, it is usually too late
> once that monopoly is created to go back and undo the damage.
>
> For that reason, and without stifling Microsoft's ability to innovate,
> Microsoft should be forced to charge for additional software that it
> ships along with the Windows operating system. There is a cost to
> develop these applications, and a formula can be derived. The exception
> would be for applications that competitors allow to be downloaded for
> free because of their distribution method, Microsoft would also be able
> to offer these services for a free download.
>
> That way, consumers can pay less than current prices for the basic
> operating system and option up for any additional applications that they
> wish to purchase, e.g. I would rather pay \$99 for Windows XP and not for
> Microsoft's image editing and music compression software, which I can
> freely get elsewhere. Consumers who want to buy the whole bundled
> package should have that option too, if they want to pay extra for it.
>
> Microsoft should also be forbidden from paying manufacturers to carry
> these additional software applications (such as Windows Media Player)
> without there being a corresponding revenue model for that software (such
> as selling a server version or development tools) to offset the cost.
> Otherwise, as a consumer, I will never be able to truly benefit from the
> free market forces, but will continue to subsidize Microsoft's ability to
> run competitors into the ground and support their continued efforts to
> dominate endless markets.
>
> It would seem appropriate that any remedy should not only include
> penalties where consumers were harmed, but also be forward looking.
>
> Thank you for your consideration.
>
> Regards,
>
> Kevin Ledgister
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> Get your FREE download of MSN Explorer at <http://explorer.msn.com>
>

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